

## President Bush Approves Request for Federal Disaster Declaration *Governor Riley Requested Federal Help on Sunday*

CLANTON – Governor Bob Riley on Monday announced he has received approval from President Bush for a federal disaster declaration in response to Hurricane Katrina.

The disaster declaration makes local governments in six counties eligible to apply for federal and state infrastructure assistance: Mobile, Baldwin, Washington, Clarke, Choctaw and Sumter. It also enables individual storm victims in Baldwin, Mobile and Washington counties to apply for federal aid.

“I appreciate this quick response from President Bush and the federal assistance that will help Alabama recover as quickly as possible,” said Governor Riley, who requested the disaster declaration Sunday. “This declaration will speed help to Alabamians affected by the hurricane and will help ease the burden on local governments as they respond and recover from this storm.”

“Our State and local emergency management teams will conduct damage assessments to determine if additional counties can be added to this disaster declaration,” said Bruce Baughman, Director of the Alabama Emergency Management Agency. “We will also begin working immediately with local officials to assess immediate needs of hurricane victims.”

The Federal Coordinating Officer and staff from the Federal Emergency Management Agency are in the State Emergency Operations Center in Clanton to coordinate the flow of federal assistance. Governor Riley has appointed Alabama Emergency Management Agency Director Bruce Baughman as the State Coordinating Officer to work with federal officials in coordinate recovery measures in the declared disaster area.

Storm victims in Mobile, Baldwin and Washington counties can call the FEMA tele-registration line to apply for assistance at **1-800-621-3362** and for the speech and hearing impaired at **1-800-462-7585**.

The presidential declaration for public assistance means federal and state assistance will be available to help local governments in the six counties recover costs for debris removal operations and emergency protective measures.